

WEEKLY DENTAL UPDATE



SPECIAL EDITION

14 May 2024

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: Passing of a Shipmate

Passing of Captain Eric “Ted” Rippert, DC, USN (Ret)



Shipmates, it is with deep regret that I inform you of the passing of **Captain Eric “Ted” Rippert, DC, USN (Ret)**.

Captain Eric “Ted” Rippert, a beloved figure in both the Navy and the field of dentistry, passed away on May 6, 2024, leaving behind a legacy of service, education, and love. Born in Fort Devens, MA, Eric spent his early years in New York City under the care of his mother while his father, Colonel Jacob Rippert, heroically fought in World War II. It was this early exposure to military life that would shape Ted’s path, instilling in him a deep sense of duty and honor.

Ted’s passion for the Navy was matched only by his love for teaching dentistry. Starting in the Navy, he embarked on a distinguished career as an educator, leaving his mark at institutions such as the Great Lakes Hospital, the University of Richmond, University of Nebraska, University of Pittsburgh, and finally the Dental College of Georgia. His dedication to teaching extended beyond the classroom, as he volunteered his time to lead tours at Constitution Island at the United States Military Academy and at the SEAL Museum in Vero Beach, Florida.

Throughout his life, Ted balanced his roles as a naval officer and a dentist with grace and skill. He served on the USS Paul Revere (LPA-248) and was a plank owner on the USS Eisenhower (CVN-69), where his leadership and expertise were invaluable. Ted’s deployment to Vietnam aboard the USS Paul Revere showcased his bravery and commitment to his country.

Ted was not only a distinguished naval officer and educator but also a devoted family man. He was married to Mary Ellen Rippert, and together they shared the joys and challenges of life. Ted is survived by his son, Thomas Ashton Rippert, and although his daughter, Kathleen Marie Rippert, has passed away, her memory lives on in the hearts of those who loved her.

A devout Catholic, Ted found solace and strength in his faith, guiding him through life's trials and triumphs. His faith was a cornerstone of his character, shaping his values and guiding his actions.

Ted's love for dentistry was evident in both his teaching and practice. As an oral surgeon, he approached his work with passion and precision, leaving a lasting impact on his students and patients alike. His love for teaching and practicing dentistry intersected beautifully, creating a legacy of excellence that will endure for generations to come.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Ted was known for his quirks and passions. He had a notorious aversion to lettuce but had a sweet tooth that was undeniable, perhaps a humorous nod to his chosen profession. His lifelong love for dogs was unmatched but he is also known for his creative side, as evidenced by his creation of a three-foot-high paper-mâché tooth while stationed at Quantico.

Ted's adventurous spirit led him to remarkable experiences, such as drinking champagne out of a crystal fruit bowl during a trip to the Soviet Union. Yet, amidst his travels and adventures, Ted always cherished his roots in Ellenville, NY. He spent countless summers at his cabin, where he found peace and joy in the simple pleasures of life.

In his passing, Ted leaves behind a void that cannot be filled, but his spirit will continue to inspire all who knew him. His legacy of service, education, and love will endure, a testament to a life well-lived at the intersection of leadership, dentistry, and teaching. As we mourn his loss, let us also celebrate the extraordinary man that Captain Eric "Ted" Rippert was and the profound impact he had on all who had the privilege of knowing him.

A funeral mass with military honors provided by the Sebastian Area Honor Guard will be held **11:00 a.m.**, Wednesday, **May 15, 2024**, at St. John of the Cross Catholic Church, 7550 26th Street, Vero Beach, FL 32966.

Arrangements are by Thomas S. Lowther Funeral Home & Crematory, Vero Beach.

Rest in Peace Captain Rippert

W. D. Brafford
RDML, DC, USN
Chief, Navy Dental Corps